

RELEASED: NOVEMBER 2005

VOLUME 18, NUMBER 11



LIVESTOCK SLAUGHTER

SEPTEMBER RED MEAT PRODUCTION

WEST VIRGINIA— Commercial red meat production during September 2005 totaled 500,000 pounds. This was down 21 percent from September 2004 but up 8 percent from August 2005 production. Commercial red meat production is the carcass weight after slaughter including beef, veal, pork, and lamb and mutton. Individual commodity production is total live weight of commercial slaughter.

Commercial cattle slaughter totaled 693,000 pounds live weight, down 18 percent from September 2004. Cattle slaughter totaled 800 head, down 100 head from the previous year. The average live weight, at 895 pounds, was down 64 pounds from a year ago.

Commercial calf slaughter was not published to avoid disclosing individual operations.

Commercial hog slaughter totaled 180,000 pounds live weight, down 16 percent from last year. Hog slaughter totaled 700 head, down 100 head from the previous year. The average live weight, at 247 pounds, was down 12 pounds from the previous year.

Commercial sheep and lamb slaughter was not published to avoid disclosing individual operations.

UNITED STATES -- Commercial red meat production for the United States totaled 3.93 billion pounds in September, up 1 percent from the 3.91 billion pounds produced in September 2004.

Beef production, at 2.16 billion pounds, was 3 percent above the previous year. Cattle slaughter totaled 2.78 million head, up 1 percent from September 2004. The average live weight was up 11 pounds from the previous year, at 1,276 pounds.

Veal production totaled 13.2 million pounds, 2 percent above September a year ago. Calf slaughter totaled 60,700 head, down 10 percent from September 2004. The average live weight was 43 pounds above last year, at 363 pounds.

Pork production totaled 1.74 billion pounds, down 2 percent from the previous year. Hog kill totaled 8.87 million head, 1 percent below September 2004. The average live weight was unchanged from the previous year, at 265 pounds.

Lamb and mutton production, at 15.6 million pounds, was down 4 percent from September 2004. Sheep slaughter totaled 231,300 head, 5 percent below last year. The average live weight was 135 pounds, up 2 pounds from September a year ago.

January to September 2005 commercial red meat production was 33.9 billion pounds, up slightly from 2004. Accumulated beef production was up slightly from last year, veal was down 7 percent, pork was up 1 percent from last year, and lamb and mutton production was down 4 percent.

September 2004 contained 22 weekdays (including one holiday) and 4 Saturdays. **September 2005** contained 22 weekdays (including one holiday) and 4 Saturdays.

CHICKENS & EGGS

September Egg Production Up Slightly

U.S. egg production totaled 7.38 billion during September 2005, up slightly from last year. Production included 6.31 billion table eggs, and 1.07 billion hatching eggs, of which 1.01 billion were broiler-type and 59 million were egg-type. The total number of layers during September 2005 averaged 342 million, down 1 percent from a year earlier. September egg production per 100 layers was 2,155 eggs, up 1 percent from September 2004.

All layers in the U.S. on October 1, 2005, totaled 343 million, down slightly from a year ago. The 343 million layers consisted of 286 million layers producing table or market type eggs, 55.1 million layers producing broiler-type hatching eggs, and 2.46 million layers producing egg-type hatching eggs. Rate of lay per day on October 1, 2005, averaged 71.9 eggs per 100 layers, up 1 percent from October 1, 2004.

Egg-Type Chicks Hatched Down 8 Percent

Egg-type chicks hatched during September 2005 totaled 33.8 million, down 8 percent from September 2004. Eggs in incubators totaled 31.8 million on October 1, 2005, down 5 percent from a year ago.

Domestic placements of egg-type pullet chicks for future hatchery supply flocks by leading breeders totaled 375,000 during September 2005, up 83 percent from September 2004.

Broiler-Type Chicks Hatched Down Slightly

Broiler-type chicks hatched during September 2005 totaled 770 million, down slightly from September 2004. Eggs in incubators totaled 632 million on October 1, 2005, up 2 percent from a year earlier.

Leading breeders placed 7.13 million broiler-type pullet chicks for future domestic hatchery supply flocks during September 2005, down 8 percent from September 2004.

NOVEMBER CROP PRODUCTION

November Crop Production

UNITED STATES - Corn production is forecast at 11.0 billion bushels, up 2 percent from last month but 7 percent below 2004. Based on conditions as of November 1, yields are expected to average 148.4 bushels per acre, up 2.3 bushels from October but 12.0 bushels below last year. If realized, both production and yield would be the second largest on record, behind last year. Of the major producing States, forecast yields are higher than last month in Iowa, Indiana, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin as producers realized larger than expected yields and late planted fields matured under favorable fall conditions. Yield prospects are still below last year in all major corn

States, except Minnesota and Wisconsin where producers are experiencing record high yields.

Soybean production is forecast at 3.04 billion bushels, up 3 percent from October but 3 percent below 2004. If realized, this would be the second largest U.S. soybean crop on record, only behind last year's crop. Based on November 1 conditions, yields are expected to average a record high 42.7 bushels per acre, up 1.1 bushels from October and 0.5 bushel above last year. Producers in the Corn Belt, the southern Delta, and most of the Southeast are realizing higher yields than expected last month, with record high yields forecast in Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, and Louisiana. Area for harvest in the U.S. is forecast at 71.3 million acres, unchanged from last month but down 4 percent from 2004.

All **cotton production** is forecast at 23.2 million 480-pound bales, up 2 percent from the October forecast but slightly below last year's record high production. Yield is expected to average 813 pounds per acre, up 16 pounds from last month but down 42 pounds from 2004. If realized, both production and yield would be the second largest on record, behind last year. The November area expected for harvest remains unchanged from last month at 13.7 million acres but is up 5 percent from 2004.

FARM LABOR

Hired Workers Down 4 Percent, Wage Rates Up 3 Percent From a Year Ago

There were 1,129,000 hired workers on the Nation's farms and ranches during the week of October 9-15, 2005, down 4 percent from a year ago. Of these hired workers, 840,000 workers were hired directly by farm operators. Agricultural service employees on farms and ranches made up the remaining 289,000 workers.

Farm operators paid their hired workers an average wage of \$9.61 per hour during the October 2005 reference week, up 29 cents from a year earlier. Field workers received an average of \$8.90 per hour, up 28 cents from last October, while livestock workers earned \$9.14 per hour compared with \$8.91 a year earlier. The field and livestock worker combined wage rate, at \$8.96 per hour, was up 27 cents from last year.

The number of hours worked averaged 42.0 hours for hired workers during the survey week, up 4 percent from a year ago.

The largest decreases in the number of hired farm workers from last year occurred in California, Florida, and in the Appalachian II (Kentucky, Tennessee, and West Virginia), Northern Plains (Kansas, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota), and Northeast I (New England and New York) regions. In California, tightened security at the Mexican border and increased competition from the higher paying construction industry caused farm worker shortages. Fruit and vegetable growers had to leave some acreage unharvested due to the shortage. Thus, fewer workers were hired during the reference week. Declining tobacco acreage in the Appalachian II region continues to greatly decrease the demand for hired workers. In Florida, tropical storms throughout much of the growing season caused significant damage to vegetable and citrus crops and delayed harvest, lessening the need for hired workers. In the Northern Plains and Northeast I regions, rain before and during the reference week delayed field crop harvest and reduced the demand for hired workers.

The largest increases in the number of hired farm workers from a year ago were in the Southern Plains (Oklahoma and Texas), Pacific (Oregon and Washington), Corn Belt II (Iowa and Missouri), Southeast (Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina), and Northeast II (Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania) regions. In the Southern Plains region, despite rain in south Texas, the reference week was mainly warm and dry, in sharp contrast to the widespread rain before and during last year's reference week. Therefore, more hired workers were needed. Apple harvest in the Pacific region was virtually complete prior to last year's reference week but was still in full swing during the reference week this year. More workers were required to handle the continuation of the harvest. In the Corn Belt II and Southeast regions, the weather was virtually ideal compared to last year's rain and muddy conditions, increasing the demand for hired workers. Continued strong demand from the nursery and greenhouse industries in the Northeast II region kept hired worker levels above last year, despite heavy rains across the region.

Hired farm worker wage rates were generally above a year ago in most regions. The largest increases

occurred in the Corn Belt II, California, Appalachian II, Lake (Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin), and Mountain III (Arizona and New Mexico) regions. The higher wages in the Corn Belt II region were due to the accelerated corn and soybean harvests which required highly skilled workers for combining and hauling. In California and in the Appalachian II region, wages were up due to a lower percentage of part time workers. Sugarbeet harvest in the Lake region progressed rapidly, necessitating more highly paid machine operators. Wages in the Mountain III region were higher because of more salaried workers putting in fewer hours, which pushed their hourly wage higher.

The 2005 U.S. all hired worker annual average wage rate was \$9.51, up 3 percent from the 2004 annual average wage rate of \$9.23. The U.S. field worker annual average wage rate was \$8.70, up 25 cents from last year's annual average. The field and livestock worker combined annual average wage rate at the U.S. level was \$8.84, up 3 percent from last year's annual average wage rate of \$8.56.

CATTLE ON FEED

U.S. Cattle on Feed Up 1 Percent

Cattle and calves on feed for slaughter market in the United States for feedlots with capacity of 1,000 or more head totaled 11.5 million head on November 1, 2005. The inventory was 1 percent above November 1, 2004 and 4 percent above November 1, 2003.

Placements in feedlots during October totaled 2.80 million, 3 percent above 2004 and 1 percent above 2003. Net placements were 2.74 million head. During October, placements of cattle and calves weighing less than 600 pounds were 880,000, 600-699 pounds were 790,000, 700-799 pounds were 600,000, and 800 pounds and greater were 525,000.

Marketings of fed cattle during October totaled 1.74 million, 3 percent below 2004 and 6 percent below 2003. This is the second lowest fed cattle marketings for the month of October since the series began in 1996.

Other disappearance totaled 58,000 during October, 12 percent below 2004 and 43 percent below 2003.

DECEMBER SURVEY ANNOUNCEMENT

A sample of West Virginia farmers will be part of the national survey of producers who will be contacted for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's annual December survey. This survey will be conducted from November 30 through December 15, by USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service by contacting farmers by mail, telephone and personal interview. The purpose of this survey is to obtain information to make estimates for the 2005 crop year. Commodities targeted by this survey are corn, soybeans, tobacco and hay. Winter wheat seeding for the 2006 crop year, December 1 inventories of hogs, chickens and grain storage capacity are also collected.

This survey provides information necessary to make the objective, reliable, comprehensive estimates that are essential to an orderly marketing system. Only NASS, through its network of State Statistical offices, can provide impartial statistics to farmers, agribusinesses, policy makers, and the general public.

We depend on the voluntary cooperation of the producers in our sample. A high response rate will ensure that West Virginia agriculture is fully and accurately represented in the regional and national picture. **As always, all individual information collected will be kept strictly confidential. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.** Results of the survey will be released beginning on January 12, 2006.

**Livestock Slaughter
Chicken & Eggs
December Crop Production
Turkey Hatchery
Poultry Slaughter**

DALE R. KING, DIRECTOR

GUS R. DOUGLASS, COMMISSIONER

**United States Department of Agriculture
National Agricultural Statistics Service
West Virginia Department of Agriculture
1900 Kanawha Boulevard East
Charleston, West Virginia 25305**

**OFFICIAL BUSINESS
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**